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'Preposterous'

Carter Aide Says Debate-Book Report Dismissed

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About a week before the Oct. 28, 1980, presidential debate, one of Ronald Reagan's campaign aides reportedly told a close friend, who was President Carter's deputy campaign counsel, that Reagan would win the debate because his aides had a copy of Carter's debate briefing book.

The friend is said to have told this to her boss, Carter campaign counsel Timothy G. Smith, who recalled yesterday that he dismissed the idea as "preposterous" because "the debate briefing books are too closely held at the White House." Smith added ruefully that he did nothing about it.

The incident, aside from being a classic example of how political Washington

works, indicates widespread knowledge inside the Reagan camp about its possession of a copy of Carter's thick question-and-answer debate game plan.

The Reagan aide in question, Charles Crawford, was not involved in preparing Reagan for the debate. He worked instead under deputy Reagan campaign manager Robert Keith Gray, who last week acknowledged receiving copies of other Carter documents that he had been told came from a "reliable White House mole."

Crawford's friend in the Carter campaign was deputy campaign counsel Carol C. Darr. Neither Crawford nor Darr could be reached yesterday. But Carter's campaign counsel, Smith, confirmed the account in a telephone interview.

Gray has maintained that the Carter White House documents he received with "White House mole" notations from a Reagan campaign volunteer, H. Daniel Jones, were innocuous. But it was learned yesterday that at least one of the memos Gray received was apparently forwarded to Reagan's campaign plane for use in preparation of the Republican candidate's speeches.

Martin Anderson, the senior domestic policy adviser who traveled with Reagan, said in a telephone interview that he has discovered in his files a copy of an Oct. 24, 1980, memo from presidential advisers Anne Wexler and Alonzo L. McDonald telling Carter Cabinet officials about the September consumer price index figures released that day and what they should say publicly about them.

Anderson said that he has turned over his copy of the memo to the archivist at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, where Reagan campaign files are stored, for transfer to the Justice Department, which is investigating how the Reagan campaign obtained documents and information from the Carter White House and campaign. The memo copy had apparently been forwarded to Anderson even though it had no notation instructing that this be done.

A copy of another Carter White House memo, dated Oct. 10, 1980, and sent by Jones to Gray, carried a typewritten notation routing it to Reagan campaign manager William J. Casey for transmittal to Anderson. But Anderson said that he had not yet found that memo copy.

The copy of this memo sent to Gray carried a handwritten note from Jones saying that it came from a "reliable White House mole." It and another memo from Jones to Gray that mentioned such a "mole" as the source of Carter campaign information were provided to The Washington Post by a collector of campaign memorabilia who had found them in a trash bin behind Reagan campaign headquarters here soon after the 1980 election.

The continuing disclosures in the case so far have produced a rather complex picture of a variety of information and documents somehow making their way from the Carter White House into the Reagan campaign. They appear to have created significant conflict in the Reagan administration, with White House chief of staff James A. Baker III and CIA Di-

rector Casey making conflicting statements about the Carter debate briefing papers.

Baker has said that he received the papers from Casey. Saying he never saw them, Casey has criticized Baker as "remiss" for not telling other campaign officials about the papers.

Conservatives in the Reagan campaign

team and the administration appear to be trying to pin the blame on—and force out—Baker and his allies, who originally joined the Reagan team from the rival Republican presidential campaign of George Bush, now vice president.

William Van Cleave, a conservative Reagan campaign defense expert, said that he recalls having seen the Carter briefing book at the time of the 1980 debate preparations. He said that "the rumor was during the campaign that Jim Baker, [David R.] Gergen and Stef Halper were taking credit for it."

Gergen, now White House director of communications, was a Baker deputy who coordinated the debate preparation. Halper, now a Washington banker, served under Baker as an issues expert in Bush's presidential campaign and was director of policy coordination in the Reagan campaign.

There are also conflicting accounts about the scope and nature of the Reagan campaign's efforts to monitor the Carter administration. The Post has reported that Casey set up what he once called an "intelligence" gathering unit in the campaign in reaction to fears that Carter would score a political victory by attempting an election-eve rescue of the American hostages in Iran.

A Reagan campaign official working under Casey, Adm. Robert Garrick, organized a group of retired military officers to watch air bases and report any unusual movements of personnel or materiel that could indicate a Carter "October surprise" was under way, although it was never clear what the Reagan campaign would do about it.

Some conservatives have noted that Bush, who was formerly director of the CIA, had attracted a number of ex-CIA officials to support his presidential candidacy. And Halper's name has been mentioned in conjunction with extracurricular political intelligence gathering. Van Cleave said of Halper, "He pretend-

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